

# **198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION**

Far too often people struggling for democratic rights and justice are not aware of the full range of methods of nonviolent action. Wise strategy, attention to the dynamics of nonviolent struggle, and careful selection of methods can increase a group's chances of success.

Gene Sharp's researched and catalogued these 198 methods and provided a rich selection of historical examples in his seminal work, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (3 Vols.) Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973

## **The Methods of Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion**

### **Formal Statements**

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public statements
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

### **Communications with a Wider Audience**

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Radio, television, internet ads and advertising
12. Skywriting and earth-writing

### **Group Representations**

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

### **Symbolic Public Acts**

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits

- 26. Paint as protest
- 27. New signs and names
- 28. Symbolic sounds
- 29. Symbolic reclamations
- 30. Rude gestures

### **Pressures on Individuals**

- 31. "Haunting" officials
- 32. Taunting officials
- 33. Fraternization
- 34. Vigils

### **Drama and Music**

- 35. Humorous skits and pranks
- 36. Performances of plays and music
- 37. Singing

### **Processions**

- 38. Marches
- 39. Parades
- 40. Religious processions
- 41. Pilgrimages
- 42. Motorcades

### **Honoring the Dead**

- 43. Political mourning
- 44. Mock funerals
- 45. Demonstrative funerals
- 46. Homage at burial places

### **Public Assemblies**

- 47. Assemblies of protest or support
- 48. Protest meetings
- 49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
- 50. Teach-ins

### **Withdrawal and Renunciation**

- 51. Walk-outs
- 52. Silence
- 53. Renouncing honors
- 54. Turning one's back

## **The Methods of Social Noncooperation**

### **Ostracism of Persons**

- 55. Social boycott

- 56. Selective social boycott
- 57. Lysistratic nonaction
- 58. Excommunication
- 59. Interdict

### **Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions**

- 60. Suspension of social and sports activities
- 61. Boycott of social affairs
- 62. Student strike
- 63. Social disobedience
- 64. Withdrawal from social institutions

### **Withdrawal from the Social System**

- 65. Stay-at-home
- 66. Total personal noncooperation
- 67. “Flight” of workers
- 68. Sanctuary
- 69. Collective disappearance
- 70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

## **The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: Economic Boycotts**

### **Actions by Consumers**

- 71. Consumers’ boycott
- 72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
- 73. Policy of austerity
- 74. Rent withholding
- 75. Refusal to rent
- 76. National consumers’ boycott
- 77. International consumers’ boycott

### **Action by Workers and Producers**

- 78. Workmen’s boycott
- 79. Producers’ boycott

### **Action by Middlemen**

- 80. Suppliers’ and handlers’ boycott

### **Action by Owners and Management**

- 81. Traders’ boycott
- 82. Refusal to let or sell property
- 83. Lockout
- 84. Refusal of industrial assistance
- 85. Merchants’ “general strike”

### **Action by Holders of Financial Resources**

- 86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
- 87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
- 88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
- 89. Severance of funds and credit
- 90. Revenue refusal
- 91. Refusal of a government's money

### **Action by Governments**

- 92. Domestic embargo
- 93. Blacklisting of traders
- 94. International sellers' embargo
- 95. International buyers' embargo
- 96. International trade embargo

### **The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: The Strike**

#### **Symbolic Strikes**

- 97. Protest strike
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

#### **Agricultural Strikes**

- 99. Peasant strike
- 100. Farm Workers' strike

#### **Strikes by Special Groups**

- 101. Refusal of impressed labour
- 102. Prisoners' strike
- 103. Craft strike
- 104. Professional strike

#### **Ordinary Industrial Strikes**

- 105. Establishment strike
- 106. Industry strike
- 107. Sympathetic strike

#### **Restricted Strikes**

- 108. Detailed Strike
- 109. Bumper strike
- 110. Slowdown strike
- 111. Working-to-rule strike
- 112. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
- 113. Strike by resignation
- 114. Limited strike
- 115. Selective strike

#### **Multi-Industry Strikes**

- 116. Generalized strike
- 117. General strike

### **Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures**

- 118. Hartal
- 119. Economic shutdown

## **The Methods of Political Noncooperation**

### **Rejection of Authority**

- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

### **Citizens' Noncooperation with Government**

- 123. Boycott of legislative bodies
- 124. Boycott of elections
- 125. Boycott of government employment and positions
- 126. Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies
- 127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions
- 128. Boycott of government-supported organizations
- 129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
- 130. Removal of own signs and placemarks
- 131. Refusal to accept appointed officials
- 132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

### **Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience**

- 133. Reluctant and slow compliance
- 134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
- 135. Popular nonobedience
- 136. Disguised disobedience
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 138. Sit-down
- 139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
- 140. Hiding, escape, and false identities
- 141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

### **Action by Government Personnel**

- 142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
- 143. Blocking of lines of command and information
- 144. Stalling and obstruction
- 145. General administrative noncooperation
- 146. Judicial noncooperation
- 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
- 148. Mutiny

## **Domestic Governmental Action**

- 149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays
- 150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

## **International Governmental Action**

- 151. Changes in diplomatic and other representations
- 152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
- 153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
- 154. Severance of diplomatic relations
- 155. Withdrawal from international organizations
- 156. Refusal of membership in international bodies
- 157. Expulsion from international organizations

## **The Methods of Nonviolent Intervention**

### **Psychological Intervention**

- 158. Self-exposure to the elements
- 159. The fast
  - a. Fast of moral pressure
  - b. Hunger strike
  - c. Satyagrahic fast
- 160. Reverse trial
- 161. Nonviolent harassment

### **Physical Intervention**

- 162. Sit-in
- 163. Stand-in
- 164. Ride-in
- 165. Wade-in
- 166. Mill-in
- 167. Pray-in
- 168. Nonviolent raids
- 169. Nonviolent air raids
- 170. Nonviolent invasion
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction
- 173. Nonviolent occupation

### **Social Intervention**

- 174. Establishing new social patterns
- 175. Overloading of facilities
- 176. Stall-in
- 177. Speak-in
- 178. Guerrilla theater

- 179. Alternative social institutions
- 180. Alternative communication system

### **Economic Intervention**

- 181. Reverse Strike
- 182. Stay-in Strike
- 183. Nonviolent land seizure
- 184. Defiance of Blockades
- 185. Politically Motivated Counterfeiting
- 186. Preclusive Purchasing
- 187. Seizure of assets
- 188. Dumping
- 189. Selective patronage
- 190. Alternative markets
- 191. Alternative transportation systems
- 192. Alternative economic institutions

### **Political Intervention**

- 193. Overloading of administrative systems
- 194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
- 195. Seeking imprisonment
- 196. Civil disobedience of “neutral” laws
- 197. Work-on without collaboration
- 198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government